Summary

Lu Xun (1881-1936), is the pen name of Zhou Shu-ren, a prominent Chinese essayist, scholar and short-story writer. He left behind to posterity a rich legacy of literature, which has exerted, and will continue to exert an immense and profound influence on the Chinese people. He wrote about seventy classical poems, many of which, like his more important stories and essays, are characterized by their poignant ironies as well as brilliant artistry. Although Lu Xun did not intend to become a poet, the works of Lu Xun remarkably reflect his fascinating personality. Thus, a close reading of his classical-style verses might bring us closer to knowing the "real" Lu Xun.

This dissertation attempts to study Lu Xun's classical poems in depth. It comprises seven chapters.

The Introductory chapter sets out the aims, objectives and the methodology adopted for the study.

Chapter Two focuses on two aspects: First, the reasons Lu Xun chose these older literary forms for the expression of "private" emotions within the modern context; second, the historical background – these two aspects are essential for an adequate understanding of his poetry.

In Lu Xun's poems, like in those of other poets, there are different and diverse interpretations by researchers. The following three chapters then analyse the most comprehensive explanations of Lu Xun's poems. Chapter Three discusses in detail the subject matter of Lu Xun's earliest verses. Chapter Four and Five deal with the selected poems (four lines 绝句 and eight lines 律诗) which give rise to much controversy, and try to point out some of the obvious errors of analysis or inadequacies in highlighting the deep feeling and the loss of the thoughts hidden in the originals.